

calls, and entering calls for service. Dispatchers are responsible for dispatching calls for service and handling all associated radio traffic and incident data.

Call takers and dispatchers are hired to work 2,080 hours a year, which is eight hours a day. Staff is then given a one hour lunch and two 15-minute breaks – per day. This reduces their work day to 6.5 hours. Add in vacations, sick leave, leave without pay, and other time away from the console, and staff is only working an average of 1,447 hours a year. On average, employees are away from work for 633 hours – which is almost four months.

It is L.R. Kimball's opinion that NOPD Communications is appropriately staffed for the current call and incident volumes. That said, L.R. Kimball recommends NOPD Communications and OPCD work together to address potential issues, such as scheduling, meal and break periods, and leave usage, which appear to be contributing factors to a high abandoned call rate. A relatively high number of abandoned calls and low call processing times are indicative of a problem. Generally speaking, the lower the call processing time, the more calls a call taker should be able to answer in a shift, reflected by a smaller number of abandoned calls. However, this is not the case with NOPD Communications. Several factors could be at play:

1. Call takers are not following established protocols for gathering information; established protocols take longer, but gather specific information.
2. Call takers are getting only minimum information from the caller before disconnecting and are completing the call after hanging up with the caller.
3. Call takers are making themselves "not ready" or "busying" themselves out to prevent calls.

While NOPD strives to provide quality service to the City residents and visitors with the tools available, there are areas that can be improved upon within the agency and with coordination and cooperation with other public safety response agencies and OPCD. The following recommendations were offered as actions that could be implemented to improve service and/or employee conditions prior to consolidation. This requirements and recommendations report may expand on these actions in support of a successful consolidation.

1. Review the current organizational structure to clarify to whom the complaint operators report. The organizational structure as reported has the complaint operators reporting to the dispatchers, when in fact they are peers and report to the Senior Police Dispatcher or Assistant Police Communications Supervisor.
2. Update Civil Service Code C7104 job description in support of the Assistant Police Communications Supervisor position. It was also noted that a job description for police major as classified under Civil Service Code C7122 – Police Major does not exist.
3. Work toward removing non-emergency duties from communication staff, such as paid detail calls. The impact on the overall workload of the center is significant. The handling

of these calls detracts from the primary purpose of the PSAP of processing emergency calls.

4. Assign Tow Administrative Officer (TAO) duties to dispatchers to increase the time that call takers (complaint operators) are available to answer incoming calls.
5. Work with NOEMS and NOFD to identify multi-agency response interoperability coordination needs and notifications, such as road closures, water main breaks, and surveillance teams, which should be shared with all agencies. Acquisition of an automated notification and alert application will enhance coordination and communication among the three agencies. This also could be accomplished by using current CAD system messaging functionality among all three agencies.
6. Work with L.R. Kimball and OPCD to identify factors that may be affecting the discrepancies between the number of complaint operators needed based on volume (14) and those required by position (45 or 59). It is L.R. Kimball's opinion that 37 to 45 complaint operators (call takers) is realistic, but not appropriately scheduled and managed/supervised. A key factor may be the amount of break time afforded by policy to the staff. Statistical data shows that employee's time away from work, including leave and breaks, equates to four months out of a year.
7. Increase supervisory staff to 14 to allow the assignment of two supervisors on-duty at all times, one of whom should always be in the communications center. Identify non-PSAP related duties that can be re-assigned within NOPD to allow the communications supervisors to focus on monitoring and supporting staff and overall operational oversight. The optimal span of control is five to seven people per supervisor per ICS. NOPD should work toward maintaining or reducing this ratio.
8. In preparation for consolidation, work with the OPCD to develop a training program that will provide the training necessary to cross-train all NOPD staff to call take and dispatch.
9. Consider actively following the established QA/QC program, which will provide consistent training, standardization, and improvement of service across the call taking and dispatching functions.
10. Develop and document tracking and maintenance process for distribution, acknowledgement, and training on policies. Update current communications SOP manual and increase efforts to provide in-service training to complaint operators and dispatch staff.
11. Review and implement CALEA standards for communication centers in preparation for possible accreditation.